Varieties of Dix Tokens 1863

Varieties of Dix Civil War Tokens of the year 1863

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Historical Incident of the Civil War

John Adams Dix was the author of the following telegram, when acting as the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, in 1861.

Treasury Dept. Jan. 29th, 1861.

Tell Lieut. Caldwell to arrest Capt. Breshwood, assume command of the Cutter and obey the order I gave through you. If Capt. Breshwood, after arrest undertakes to interfere with the command of the Cutter, tell Lieut. Caldwell to consider him as a Mutineer, treat him accordingly. If any one attempts to haul down the American flag shoot him on the spot.

(Signed) John A. Dix,
Secretary of the Treasury.

JOHN ADAMS DIX

John Adams Dix was born at Boscawen, N. H., July 24th, 1798. He entered the Army as a Cadet 1812. In 1813 he was appointed an Ensign in the Army, and was soon promoted to 3rd Lieutenant, was commissioned a Captain in 1825, and having continued in the Army sixteen years, he left the military service in 1828. In 1830 he was appointed Adjutant General of the State of New York by Governor Throop, was elected Secretary of State of New York in 1833. In 1842 he was a member of the New York Assembly. From 1845 to 1849 a member of the United States Senate. In 1859 he was appointed Postmaster of New York City. In 1861 he was called to the post of Secretary of the Treasury and soon after sent the famous telegram to Hemphill Jones, his Deputy. During the War he held the rank of Major General, was Minister to France in 1867-68, was elected Governor of the State of New York in 1872. Died April 21st, 1879.

The telegram of John Adams Dix was the basis for the issue of a Token, having on one side the Flag of the United States and around it "The Flag of our Union, 1863." On the reverse side in two circles, "If anybody attempts to tear it down, shoot him on the spot." In the center "DIX." These tokens striking a popular chord, were issued by the thousand and used as cents, and passed current in change, with many other Tokens of a different character, the circulation of these tokens was acceler-

ated by the speculators having gathered the cents of the United States and selling them to merchants at a premium of 20 per cent.

The Dix tokens were struck in different alloys of copper and zinc, slightly larger than the present bronze cent, measuring from 19½ to 20 M. M. in diameter.

D. C. Wismer.

FOREWORD

Varieties of Dix Civil War Tokens

Numbered according to rarity Number 1, 2 and 3 being the most common varieties, from that to Number 19 they increase in rarity. The spoot variety, on account of its oddity, being in the greatest demand, has sold at the highest prices, but there are thirteen varieties scarcer than the spoot variety, which comes as Number 6 in the list. Cracks in dies or crumbling and roughness have not been considered as forming varieties.

General Description

Obverse. United States Flag floating in the breeze, with Stars, Stripes and Staff, with Liberty Cap on top of Flag staff, surrounded by a circle of thirteen stars, in a circle inside of border, "The Flag of our Union." "1863." Indented border, plain edge, a Trefoil before and after inscription.

Reverse. In a circle between border and a raised ring, "If anybody attempts to tear it down" a star between if and down. In an inner circle, between the raised ring and a serrated ring, "Shoot him on the spot." Two stars on each side between "shoot him" and "on the spot." Inside of serratod ring "DIX" in center, indented border.

No. 1

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, the middle star in the upper row is low, the flag staff ends on a level with bottom of 1 of date, a carefully executed die.

Reverse. S of shoot opposite to A of attempt, M of him opposite T of tear, S of spot opposite to W of down, toothed ring around DIX.

No. 2

Obverse. Same as No. 1.

Reverse. S of shoot opposite to first T of attempt, M. of him opposite to T of tear, S of spot high and opposite to N of down, rope like ring around DIX. This die crumbled badly forming many small lumps around the letters, a break in the die developing at the top of letters "tear it down."

No. 3

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, middle vertical row of stars high, Flag staff does not extend to quite on a level with bottom of 1 of date, trefoil nearer to Fag than in No. 1. Lower right hand corner of Flag more pointed.

Reverse. Same as No. 1

No. 4

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, only two stars below flag, between flag and flag staff, no date, small diamond shaped ornament below flag where the date is located in the other varieties. Many of these show break in die from lower right hand corner of flag through ornament to border below flag staff.

Reverse. S of shoot is opposite to right stand of A of attempt, M of him is opposite

to E of tear, S of spot is opposite to between W and N of down. In this variety, there is no raised ring between outer and inner circle of lettering, there is only one star between shoot him and on the spot on each side of the circle. Parts of the letters shoot show around the word shoot showing the die was re-engraved, rope like ring around DIX.

NO 5

Obverse. Flag has 30 stars, end of flag staff even with bottom of 1 of date, 3rd, 8th and 13th stars touch flag and flag staff. Die shows several cracks around date.

Reverse. Similar to No. 5. S of shoot is opposite to between Y of anybody and A of attempt, S of spot is opposite to W of down, has no ring between two circles of lettering, rope like ring around DIX.

No. 6

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars. Middle vertical row of stars high, flag staff ends at middle of 1 of date, lower right hand corner of flag ends in roundish lump with sharp point, and close to trefoil at right.

Reverse. The distinguishing feature of this reverse is that the word spot is misspelled "spoot." Have never found any difference in obverse or reverse of this variety.

No. 7

Obverse. Same as No. 6.

Reverse. Same as No. 1.

No. 8

Obverse. Flag has 36 stars, irregular at bottom, flag staff ends on a level with bottom of 1 of date, lower right hand corner of flag curves towards date.

Reverse. S of shoot is opposite to first T of attempt, M of Him is opposite to between O of to and T of tear, S of spot is opposite to between W and N of down, toothed ring around DIX.

No. 9

Obverse. Same as No. 1.

Reverse. S of shoot opposite to A of attempt, M of him opposite to E of tear, S of spot opposite to N of down, toothed ring around DIX.

No. 10

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, left side vertical row high, flag staff distant from 1 of date ends on a level with 1 of date, lower right hand corner of flag ends in thin sharp point, 3 of date and trefoil close to point of flag.

Reverse. Same as No. 9.

No. 11

Obverse. Obverse same as No. 10.

Reverse. A close copy of No. 9, but S of shoot opposite to right stand of A of attempt, P of spot is too high and S too low and out of line, there is a line to the right of A and T of attempt showing tooling, and a beaded ring around DIX.

No. 12

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, well lined up and spaced, flag staff close to and extends below bottom of 1 of date, 13th star touches right hand corner of flag.

Reverse. Same as No. 1.

No. 13

Obverse. Same as No. 6.

Reverse. Same as No. 9.

No. 14

Obverse. Same as No. 8.

Reverse. Same as No. 5.

No. 15

Obverse. Flag has 25 stars, stars are large and prominent. Flag staff ends at middle of 1 of date and is distant from it, button on Liberty cap is close to O of of. Letters in FLAG not well lined up.

Reverse. Same as No. 11.

No. 16

Obverse. Same as No. 8.

Reverse. Same as No. 4.

No. 17

Obverse. Same as No. 12.

Reverse. Location of letters S of shoot and M of him are similar to No. 8, but the letter S of spot is to the right in opposition to the letter W in down, and the letter T of spot is opposite to 1 of it. And the raised ring around DIX resembles a cord being wound around a wire.

No. 18

Obverse. Same as No. 4.

Reverse. Same as No. 5.

No. 19

Obverse. Same as No. 8.

Reverse. S of shoot opposite to first T of attempt, M of him opposite to between T and E of tear, S of spot opposite to N of down, S and O of spot re-engraved, toothed ring around DIX.